Office 365

Office 365 is on its way

What is Office 365?

Office 365 is a set of applications that the State of Wisconsin will be deploying to include: email, document and file creation, and collaboration tools. The good news is you have been utilizing these tools for years. The difference for many of us is the introduction of new versions of your old favorites. This includes the Outlook application for accessing email; Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Access); OneNote, a note-taking function; and SharePoint, a storage and application platform that permits file storage, application development, and collaboration.

Office 365 is a cloud-based service, and many of the tools are accessed over the Internet. For the majority, the Microsoft Office application you use regularly will continue to be accessed through your computer; however, once you have migrated to Office 365, those applications and files will also be accessible over the Internet and from alternate locations.

Why Office 365?

Microsoft is moving toward a subscription model and cloud-based delivery for its Office suite of products. Users are increasingly becoming more mobile and need an easier way to collaborate, share, and work on documents outside of the traditional PC-only experience. More than a dozen other states have already migrated or are in the process of migrating their Office suite to Office 365 solutions. Licensing and patching are much easier to maintain with the Office 365 solution.

How does it impact me?

The impacts to you are relatively minor. For example, to access your Outlook email today, your email comes from an Exchange server in the DET data center. When you move to Office 365, you can access Outlook from an Exchange server in the cloud – or more specifically, in a Microsoft data center.

The Outlook Web Application (OWA) also has a new and different look for those who choose to use it. Microsoft re-designed OWA 2016 and renamed it "Outlook on the Web." The former OWA user interface has been updated and optimized for tablets and smart phones with the functionality that comes close to the full Outlook client experience.

One significant enhancement is all personal mailboxes will have a default 100 gigabyte mailbox limit.

When can I start using it?

Rollout of Office 365 (Office 2016 and Exchange Online mailbox migration) for you is scheduled to be completed after June 24th. You will be notified via email prior to migration and on your migration day.
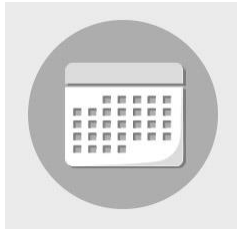
How do I learn more?

Additional emails will be sent prior to the launch date, with further instructions and details regarding functionality and usage.

As with any DET initiative, please contact the DOA Help Desk with questions (608-267-6930 or by email at doahelpdesk@wisconsin.gov).
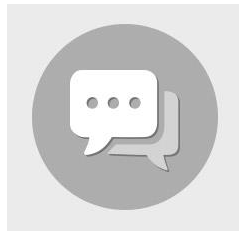
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